



**Baltimore City Landmark Designation  
and  
Special List Report  
for  
Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church Building  
(700 Block South Ann Street)  
&  
1733 Alicanna Street (Four Bay House)  
Fells Point, Maryland**

**April 2007**

## **Historical Significance:**

Reportedly between 1868 and 1870, as the majority of Polish immigrants landed in Locust Point and moved to the mid-west, about ten families settled in the Fells Point area rather than heading westward. At first these families joined a Czech church of Saint Wenceslaus which was headed by a Polish born priest, Rev. Peter Koncz. However, many of these first families became disenchanted with the Czech church and organized for themselves the Saint Stanislaus Kostka Benevolent Society in 1875. The organization helped its members with sickness and death benefits during the troubled economic times in the 1870s. By the turn of the century the Polish community in the Baltimore area numbered near 30,000 and stretched through several waterfront communities. In addition to the charitable work that the new organization committed itself to it also expressed its desire to raise enough funds to build a church to service the growing populations' spiritual needs.

Prior to the building of the church the society was allowed to start a Polish church with approval from Archbishop Gibbons and they celebrated Mass in a small house at 223 South Bond Street. Archbishop Gibbons also helped purchase the land the church would later build on for \$4,000. In 1880 the church was completed at a cost of \$28,000 and named after Saint Stanislaus Kostka who lived from 1550 to 1568 and who was canonized a saint in 1726 by Pope Paul V. Sadness fell to this congregation with the death of its first pastor, Father Koncz, in 1886. Following Father Koncz as pastor was Father John Rodowicz who oversaw the demolition of the first church and the building of the current church in 1889, before he passed on in 1896. The smaller church was demolished due to watery and sandy soil conditions beneath the church. To give the new church a solid base to be built upon posts were driven and concrete was poured into the ground.

Successors of the church would later on add a rectory building at the corner of Ann and Aliceanna Streets and start the sister parish of St. Casimir's Church in Canton. In 1905 his Eminence Cardinal Gibbons entrusted the parish to the Franciscan Fathers. They completed numerous other projects including the construction of the Hall building, the purchase of land for the cemetery, the purchase of a house to become an orphanage, and the enlarging of the church by excavating the basement for the new lower church.

According to the historic maps the building commonly referred to as the four bay house at 1733 Aliceanna Street was originally used by a blacksmith and then later as a convent by 1914 even though the main convent building was located on South Ann Street. This house was owned by the same blacksmithing family for roughly fifty years before the church bought the property. But further research into the past owners and census information reveals that a ship carpenter by the name of William Dunsford was listed as living at the property from 1803 to 1810 and was a seaman who was noted as being captured by the British on June 12, 1813 during the War of 1812. In the 1820s the next occupant an Inn keeper at Bond and Fell Streets, Thomas Pamphilon, according to Census records is shown as having a total of four white males, one white female and four young female slaves living on the property. Coincidentally, these slaves lived at the site at the same time that another famous slave, Frederick Douglas, lived in the next block over. Maps of the site show that the blacksmith workshop was located at the rear of the property in what is now the parking lot behind the church building. *(Note: any construction in the parking lot vicinity may unearth archaeological artifacts and*

*structures related to the blacksmithing operation or where additional housing quarters may have been located)* A special note was inserted into an early deed in 1817 that clearly indicates that the building had a gable styled roof which existed before being re-adapted with the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Italianate cornice details. This building was purchased by the church in 1892.

A new convent building was blessed upon its completion in 1926 by Archbishop Curley and initially run by Felician nuns then later by the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph from Hamburg, New York.

Throughout the 1930s improvements were made throughout the complex with the most significant being the removal of the 100 foot tall steeple which had become termite infested. The church and the buildings of the complex also became one of the major focal points of the American Labor movement in the 1930s. It was described as not only being the religious landmark but also as the local headquarters to the Longshoremen's Strike of 1936. In 1954 a new steeple (42 feet high in total) composed of four 20 foot crosses were erected. In the ensuing years the buildings on the site survived fires (1978 fire at the parish hall) and a 1970s proposal to put the highway through the site.

## **Architectural Description:**

### **1) Saint Stanislaus Church Building (700 Block South Ann Street):**

The Parish church that stands on the site now was built in 1897 on the site of the previous and smaller church that was established a decade earlier. The church is a brick five story high structure facing east on South Ann Street in the Fells Point neighborhood.

The church is designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The church entrance façade stands facing eastward with a three-bay wide design pattern. The church stands five-stories high and is composed of brick laid out in a common running bond pattern with some brick diamond patterns found near the top of the central spire tower. The main façade has three predominant brick archway entrances with concentric brick reveals. The central bay has a square tower with a steeple top. This square tower mass has vertical ventilation openings. The top of the square base holds an octagonal spire bell tower with four 20 foot crosses. The central tower fourth story contains a sculpture niche that holds a figure of St. Stanislaus holding a figure of a small child. The underside of base of the statue stand is decorated with an Acanthus leaf motif. The entire façade is divided horizontally by five bands of granite with embellished decorative motifs at the corners. The motifs appear to be clamshell in appearance and probably relate directly to the nautical nature of the patrons and the community. The central bay has a pair of large rectangular stained glass windows on the second story and a pair of rounded arch stained glass windows on the third story. The stained glass motifs are floral in nature throughout the entire exterior of the church. The façade also has corner turrets that rise from the north and south corners that topped with octagonal steeples which have crosses at the very top.

The church plan is a typical three aisle long church plan with a cruciform altar apse end. The depth of the church on the exterior is seven bays deep and covered with high pitch gabled roof mass. Four of the bays contain a pair of two two-story high arched stained

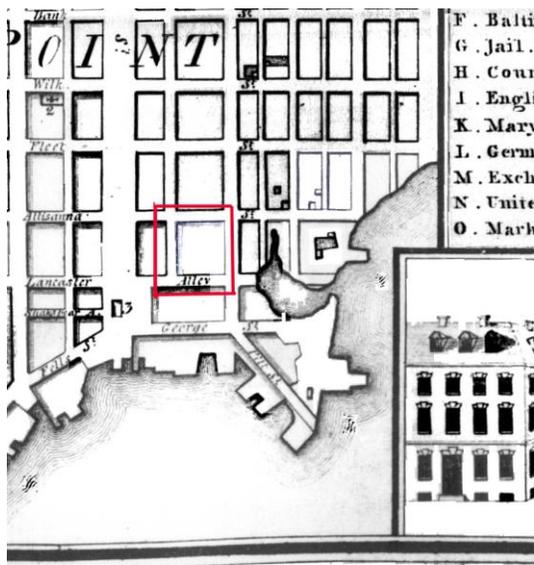
glass windows. One bay contains a single arch stain glass window and the final two bays have either bland brick or smaller utilitarian window openings.

## 2) Four Bay House (1733 Aliceanna Street):

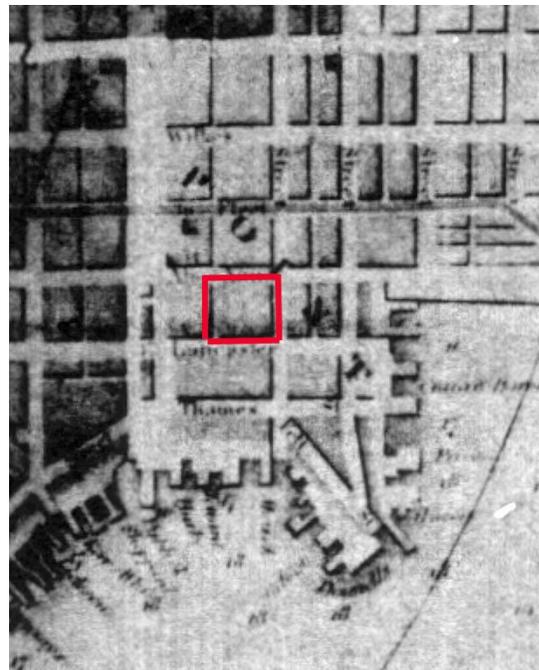
The building at 1733 Aliceanna Street and referred to in the neighborhood as the “Four Bay House” does not have its entire original façade. It appears that before the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the façade was partially re-worked from its original, pre-1800, Georgian style façade, yet still maintained most of those details.

The building has an asymmetrical façade composed of four bays and stands three stories high. At first glance the façade appears to be a typical late 18<sup>th</sup> century Italianate façade structure. A closer examination of the façade reveals that the main side entrance surround composed of wood and framed by two Ionic pilaster columns which holds a flat entablature, is actually a Georgian style un-pedimented door frame. The entablature contains small dentils and aluminum sheeting may be covering up the more ornate and classical door entrance typical of the Georgian period. The window openings currently have contemporary one-over-one double hung windows but may have been originally either nine-over-nine or twelve-over-twelve. The proportions of these windows fit the proportions of Georgian period houses and not the tall and narrow style of the later Italianate. Another strong Georgian element is the granite keystone style lintels on the first and second stories. The brick styling on the first and second story is another early indication as it was done in a Flemish bond style. The third story uses a five stretcher and alternating rowlock brick pattern that is also more commonly referred to as an English rowlock style. The current cornice is high style Italianate wood frame with detailed modillions and framed by six ornate brackets. Located between the brackets are five panels with a swag motif. This third story is clearly a later and contributing addition to this structure that has survived other on-site demolitions.

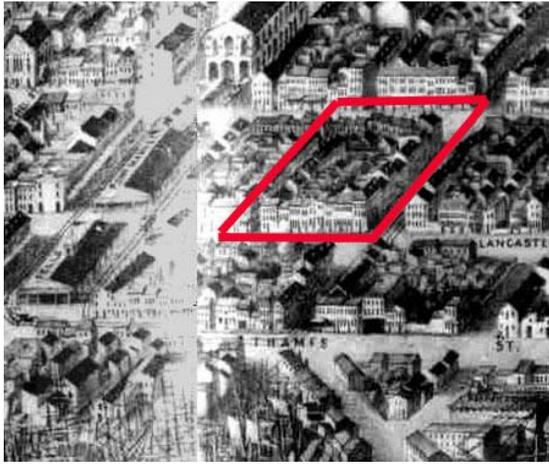
### Historic Development Timeline:



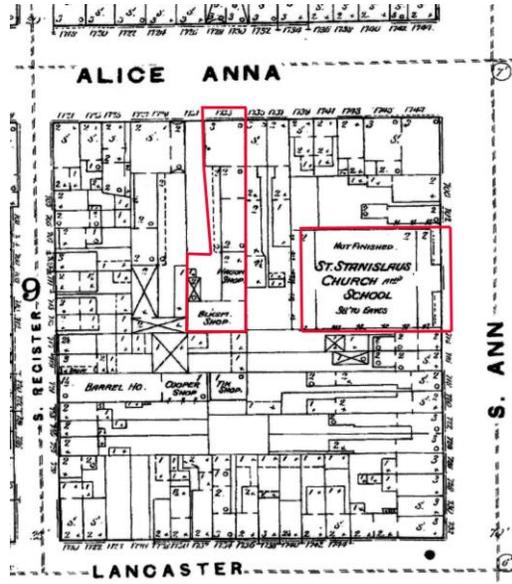
1801



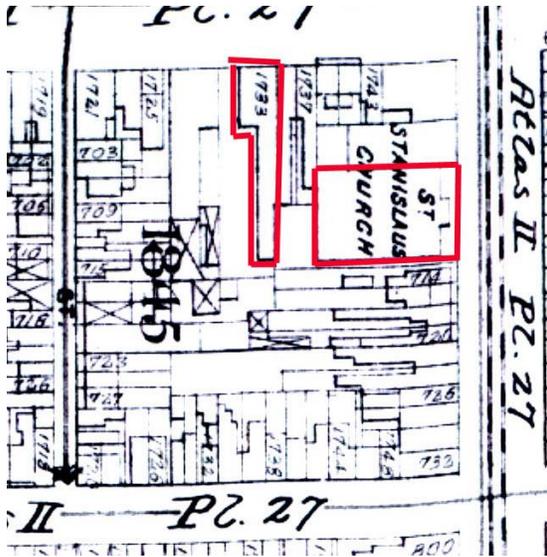
1845



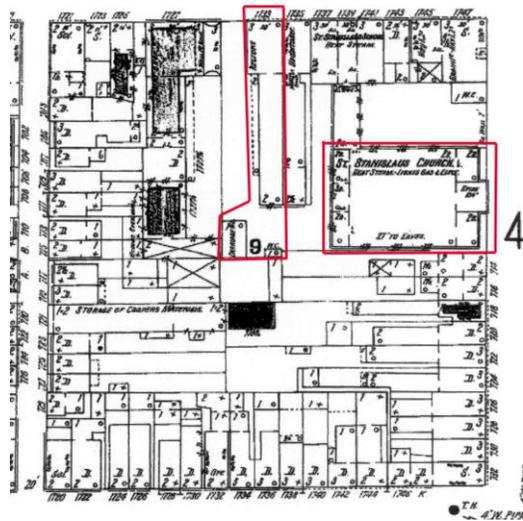
1869 Sachse Aerial View



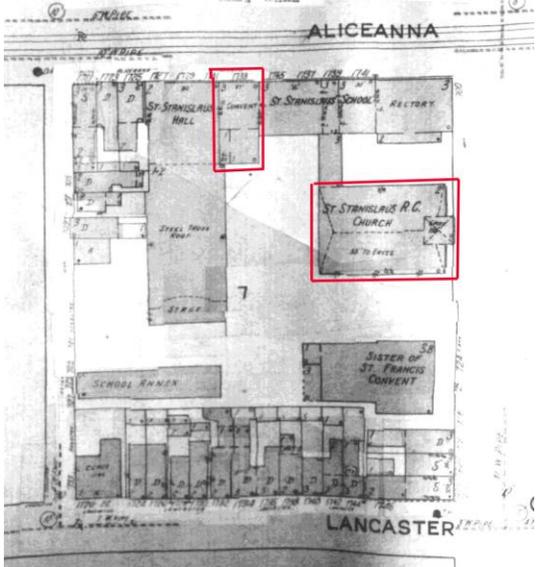
1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



1896 Bromley Map of Baltimore



1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



1914 Sanborn Insurance Map



2005 IMap Aerial View- Structures being Designated in red outline.

**Historic Images of Saint Stanislaus Site:**



Photo circa 1955 (corner building, Rector's, now demolished)



Fells Point by A. Aubrey Bodine, 1930's

—Peale Museum

View of Thames Street and Church Steeple

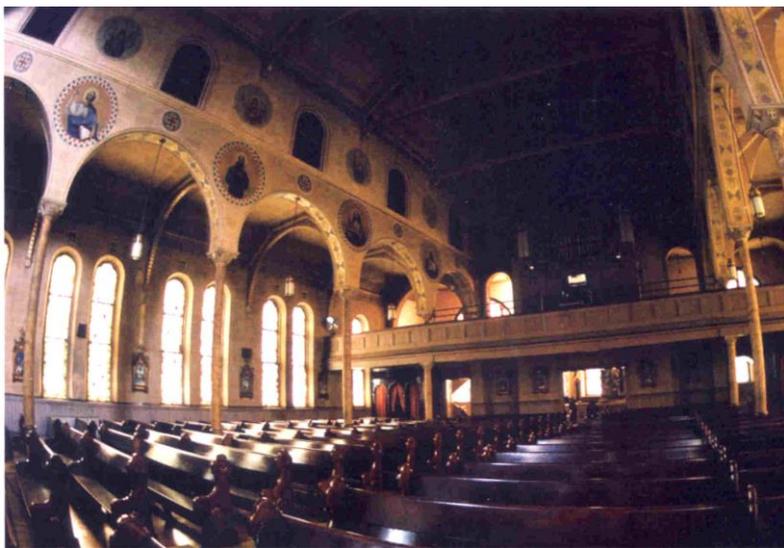


Interior View 1955

**Architectural Details:**

**St. Stanislaus Church Building:**







**1733 Alicanna Street (Four Bay House):**



**Staff Recommendations:**  
**For Baltimore City Landmark and Special List**

**1) Saint Stanislaus Church Building (700 Block South Ann Street):**

Meets CHAP Landmark Criteria:

1. dates from a particular period having a significant character, interest, or value, as part of the development, heritage, or culture of the City of Baltimore; and
2. is associated with the life of an outstanding historical person or persons; and
3. is the site of an historic event with a significant effect upon the cultural, political, economic, social, or historic heritage of the City of Baltimore; and
4. is significant of the architectural period in which it is built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, method of construction, or engineering, or is the notable work of a master builder, designer, engineer, artist or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; and
5. contributes information of historical, cultural, or social importance relating to the heritage of the community;

**2) Four Bay House (1733 Aliceanna Street):**

Meets CHAP Landmark Criteria:

1. dates from a particular period having a significant character, interest, or value, as part of the development, heritage, or culture of the City of Baltimore; and
4. is significant of the architectural period in which it is built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, method of construction, or engineering, or is the notable work of a master builder, designer, engineer, artist or architect whose individual genius influenced his age;